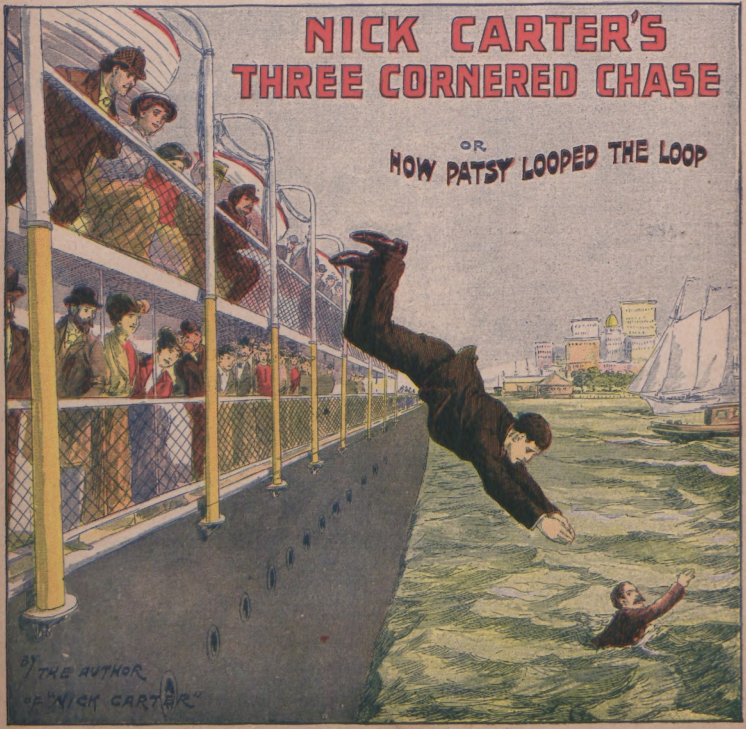
NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription $2.50 per year. Entered at Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, *238 William St., N. Y.*

No. 328. *Price, Five Cents.*

NICK CARTER'S THREE CORNERED CHASE

OR, HOW PATSY LOOPED THE LOOP



NICK STOOD FOR A MOMENT WATCHING THE FUGITIVE, WHO SEEMED TO BE A GOOD SWIMMER, THEN, WITH A BOUND, PLUNGED OVER THE RAIL OF THE BIG STEAMER IN PURSUIT.

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Nick Carter's Three-Cornered Chase;

OR,

HOW PATSY LOOPED THE LOOP.

By the author of "NICHOLAS CARTER."

CHAPTER I.

THE HACKETT JEWEL ROBBERY.

It was a rainy morning, and Nick Carter, Chick and Patsy were seated around the long table, covered with papers, that stood in the center of the floor in Nick's office.

They had just concluded their examination of the papers in the case of a murderer they had caught recently.

The case had ended in a very satisfactory manner, so far as the detectives were concerned.

The proofs against the man they had captured were conclusive and the lightest sentence he could expect was a life imprisonment.

Nick arose, stretched himself and lit a cigar.

"I'm glad that case is finished," he said; "see that the papers get to the lawyer to-day, Patsy."

"All right, sir," said Nick's youngest assistant.

"We might as well get them off our hands, so I'll take them right around now," and, gathering together the papers, which were scattered on the table, he left the room.

"I'm a little tired of these murder cases," said Nick. "We have had a lot of them lately."

"A good smuggling case for the United States Government to employ us on would just about hit my fancy," said Chick, puffing a cloud of blue smoke into the air and sliding down into a comfortable position in the big leather-cushioned armchair in which he sat.

"Well, I don't know," said Nick, "a smuggling case is generally a simple thing after all. All that it requires to solve it is hard work. Hello!—there's a ring at the telephone."

Chick ran to the telephone and picked up the receiver.

"Yes, this is the Carter's—yes—yes—good-by."

He dropped the receiver and turned to Nick.

"They want us at James Hackett's house," he said, "big jewel robbery—last night."

Everybody in New York knows that James Hackett is one of the prominent men on Wall Street, president of one bank, director of several others, and owner of millions of dollars worth of real estate in the heart of the city.

Nick raised his eyebrows and cast aside his cigar.

"You can come along with me, Chick," he said, "this looks as if it might pan out to be a big case. Leave word for Patsy to run up to Hackett's house. We may need him. Leave a note for him on the table. He'll get it when he comes in."

Nick drew on his mackintosh, donned a slouch hat, and, closely followed by Chick, left the house.

A passing cab, which they hailed, brought them to the big, brownstone residence of James Hackett, the banker, which stood on one of the side streets, just off Fifth Avenue, and they were admitted at once to the presence of the great financier.

James Hackett was a stout, ruddy, elderly gentleman, with a clear way of putting things.

He let Nick see how the land lay in a few sentences.

His wife had always kept her diamonds and other jewels in a heavy oaken chest, in a room adjoining her bedchamber, on the third floor of the house.

Early that morning, at about one o'clock, the family had been awakened by the barking of a dog in the basement.

The banker and Theodore, his son, who lived in the house with him, had run downstairs in time to see a man disappear over the fence of the yard back of the house.

It was found that a window, opening into the kitchen from the back yard, had been forced open with a jimmy.

Tom, a thoroughbred English bulldog, which had been left in the basement, had evidently tackled the burglar, and it had been his barking that had aroused the household.

On going upstairs, the banker had found that the antique oaken chest, in which his wife's jewels had been kept, had been broken open and that the jewels were missing. The jewels were worth at least fifty thousand dollars, the banker said.

"I have only one clew to offer you as to the identity of the burglar," said Mr. Hackett. "The thief got away so quickly that neither my son nor myself saw just what he was like. Tom, the dog, had a taste of him, for his teeth and jaws were covered with blood, and we found this piece of cloth, which he had evidently torn from the leg of his trousers."

The banker handed Nick a blood-stained, oval tattered piece of blue serge cloth.

Nick examined it carefully and handed it over to Chick for safe keeping without a word.

"Now I would like to see the scene of the robbery," he said, turning to the banker.

"Certainly, sir, certainly," said the rich man, as he led the way upstairs.

A large oaken chest, heavily studded and banded ith dull bronze, stood in the corner of the room which Nick entered.

Nick carefully examined the lock, or rather the place where the lock had been, for the thief, by the artful use of a screwdriver, had removed the screws which held the big lock and lifted it out.

It lay beside the chest on the floor. Nick looked at it curiously.

"Like most imitations of the antique, this lock was more for ornament than for use," he said. "A boy might have picked it open without taking the trouble to remove all those screws."

Just at this moment the door opened, and a tall, dark-haired young man, with a rather handsome face, entered the room.

"My son, Theodore—Mr. Nicholas Carter—Mr. Chickering Carter," said the banker, introducing him to the two detectives.

"Theodore was the first to discover the loss of the jewels," he added; "we were all downstairs, talking the matter over after the burglar had escaped, and Theodore had gone upstairs above, when suddenly he discovered that the chest had been broken open and that the diamonds were gone."

"Indeed," said Nick, dryly, looking keenly at the young man. "Now I'll just take a look around downstairs. Chick, you might run around and talk to the servants."

Nick started downstairs, followed by Theodore Hackett, who was evidently anxious to become acquainted with the great detective, for he spoke to him several times on the way down.

Nick, however, seemed disinclined for conversation, and his answers were generally in monosyllables.

"Evidently the work of a gang of professional burglars," said the young man as Nick, the banker and he reached the ground floor.

"Do you think so?" said Nick.

"It must be," said the young man, in a tone of conviction. "Everybody in the house is honest."

"Sure of that?" asked Nick.

"Of course," said the young man, "you don't suppose any of the servants would have taken the jewelry, do you?"

"I don't suppose anything," said Nick, with a smile. "That's not my business."

"Well, so long, Mr. Carter," said the young man. "I must be off. Wish you success and I hope to see you again."

"Thanks," said Nick, "I think you will."

"One moment," added Nick, as the young man turned to go, "excuse me for troubling you, but I want to ask you a few questions."

"Certainly—go ahead."

"You discovered the robbery. Did you notice anything about the room that might be a clew to the case?"

"Not a thing," said young Hackett, with a smile.

"How long were you upstairs before you discovered it?"

"About three-quarters of an hour. You see the family were all excited over the burglary and nobody felt like going to bed. My father collected everybody in the dining-room and they had a sort of early morning lunch to celebrate the event. You see, nobody knew that the jewels had been taken and they were all in good spirits, thinking that the burglars had received a warm reception from Tom, the dog, and nothing more."

"I see," said Nick, gravely, glancing keenly at Theodore. "You think that a professional burglar got the jewels?"

For some reason or other the smile left the young man's face.

"Of course I do," said Theodore, "but my opinion can be of little value to a good detective like you."

"Your true opinion is of the very greatest value," said Nick, still keeping his eyes fixed on the young man's face.

Mr. Theodore Hackett evidently didn't like the way the detective looked at him.

"Good-day," he said, and left the room.

Theodore Hackett left the house a moment later and Nick went upstairs for a talk with Mrs. Hackett, who had expressed a desire to see him.

She was a beautiful woman, although well on in life.

The loss of the diamonds seemed to have shattered her nerves, for her manner was strained and unnatural, and Nick watched her very closely as he questioned her.

He finally took his leave, and, after shaking hands with Mr. Hackett and promising him to report what progress he had made within a day or two, went out to the street, where he was joined by Chick, who had finished his questioning of the servants.

"Nothing doing in the way of clews," said Chick. "All their rooms have been searched, too. Looks like the work of a good second-story man."

"I don't know," said Nick, "I'm pretty sure it isn't the work of a professional burglar."

At that moment a cabman drew up alongside of the detective.

"Mr. Carter, there's a gentleman in a hotel, a couple of blocks away, sent for you. He said I'd find you here. He wants you alone, in a hurry. There's an important case there."

"Who is he?" asked Nick.

"An old friend, he says he is," said the cabman, "he didn't give his name."

"Something queer about this," said he, drawing Chick aside. "It may be all O. K. It may be a joke or it may be somebody trying to get me off this case.

"I'm going, anyway. Give Patsy that piece of cloth, when he comes, and let him get after the man whose trousers it came off. Then you can wait for me at the office."

Before Chick could answer, Nick bounded into the cab and the cabman had whipped up his horses.

"Mighty queer thing," said Chick, to himself, with a worried look. "I wonder if it is any plan on the part of the burglars to do him up. I wonder what he thinks of the case. He's got some clew of his own, but, to my mind, it is a case of an ordinary burglary."

Chick, standing in the rain, waiting for Patsy's appearance, puzzled over the question for a moment and then tried to light a cigar. He had just gotten the match properly ignited, sheltering it from the wind between his hands, and was ready to light up when some one behind him struck him so violently on the back that the match dropped from his hand.

He turned around with an angry face, but his anger left him when he saw who it was.

"Hello, Patsy," he said, "we've got a dandy case on hand, and you've got to do the whole thing."

"Me?" said Patsy. In most cases, Nick's youngest assistant had the drudgery and tedious work—such as looking up names in directories, shadowing unimportant criminals, getting warrants for arrests from the police courts, etc.

He listened eagerly as Chick told the details of the great diamond robbery.

"Here's our only clew," said Chick, handing over the piece of cloth that Tom, the bulldog, had chewed from the suit of some unknown. "Nick has either got another big case on hand or he's working this on some method that he won't let out, and he wants me to help him. So for the present you've got to engineer the whole case single handed."

Patsy was properly impressed with the responsibility Chick thus thrust upon him.

"Gee!" he said, "I guess I'm up against it."

CHAPTER II.

THE RAINES LAW HOTEL.

When Nick threw himself into the cab and was whirled around the corner into a side street, he knew he was doing a risky thing.

It was no new thing for a criminal, learning that he had been employed on a case, to try and kill him or put him out of the way.

Nick's reputation for shrewdness was so great that a crook often considered that the only way to escape discovery was to get Nick off the case by doing him up.

Nick knew this.

He also knew that a man who tried to get him off a case must have some interest in it himself.

The cab went east until it reached Second Avenue, then it drew up before a dingy saloon, with the sign "Mulligan's Eagle Hotel" over the door.

It was one of the Raines Law hotels, so common in New York City.

They are saloons, with a few cubby holes, called rooms, upstairs, and are to be seen on every corner in the toughest sections of the city.

Nick jumped out of the cab. Before he did so, he had examined the forty-two calibre Smith & Wesson he carried in his pocket, seeing that it was properly loaded.

He also slipped a brass knuckle upon the middle finger of his left hand.

"I may want to tap somebody over the head," he said to himself, "and there's no use breaking my knuckles all up."

The saloon was deserted save for the bartender.

"Two gents in the back room," the bartender said.

"I see," said Nick.

Then he pushed the door into the back room open, but, instead of entering he stepped to one side.

What happened was just what Nick expected.

There was a heavy thud as a sandbag landed on the floor.

It landed just where Nick would have been standing had he entered.

A second later Nick was in the room, grasping the man who had swung the sandbag by the throat.

There was another man on the other side of the door and he sprang at Nick like a tiger.

Nick's long left arm struck out.

Biff!

The brass knuckles caught the man full on the forehead and he fell in a heap as if shot.

Nick then turned his whole attention to the man he had seized by the throat.

This man was like most criminals, short of stature, but hard as nails and active as a wild cat.

He writhed and twisted like an eel, while with both hands he tried to break Nick's grasp at his throat, but it was no use.

Then he tried other tactics.

Two hard kicks on Nick's shins aroused the detective, and the next minute the man was thrown against the table.

He fell with a crash among the ruins of the table.

At this moment the bartender appeared at the door—a bungstarter in one hand, a revolver in the other.

Nick wheeled around like a flash and his own weapon was drawn, covering the bartender before that worthy had clearly comprehended what was happening.

"You know me," thundered Nick. "Give me the key to that door and get out, or I'll blow your head off."

The detective was a little heated from his exertions and did not mince his words.

The bartender's jaw dropped, and his red face turned a sickly mottled white.

"Certainly, Mr. Carter, certainly," he mumbled.

After some fumbling in his pockets, he procured the key.

"Now if you get me a bottle of ammonia," said Nick, "I'll try and bring these men to. They seem to be feeling a little ill, and I want to brace them up a little and talk to them."

The bartender looked at the two men.

They might be dead as far as appearances went.

One lay huddled up against the wall, and the other was half buried by the ruins of the table he had been thrown against.

"Chase yourself," said Nick, "this isn't a sleeping contest."

The bartender jumped as if shot and hurried behind the bar.

He had a bottle of ammonia there which he used in making early morning "bracers" for men who had been drinking hard the night before.

He handed it over to Nick.

"Now," said Nick, "you need not report this to the police. I'll have a talk with that chap and we'll leave quietly, and no one will ever know there's been a fight here. All you've got to do is to let us alone."

"Thank you, sir; very good, sir," said the bartender.

He hustled out, and Nick, after locking the door, devoted his attention to the two men.

They were stunned. One of them had an ugly cut where the brass knuckles had struck him, but neither of them were seriously injured.

Nick, after searching their clothes and securing a revolver, a loaded club and two fair sized rolls of bills, applied the ammonia to their nostrils and both of them came to very quickly.

They were both typical East-side toughs, dirty, unshaven and heavily scented with bad whiskey.

They stared stupidly at Nick, as their senses first came back to them, but the sight of his stern face and gleaming revolver soon brought them to a frame of mind befitting their position.

Nick had seated himself in a chair and pulled a small table, which had not been broken in the struggle, in front of it.

He laid the money and weapons he had taken from the two men, together with his own pistol, on this table.

The men gazed at the collection of articles and then at Nick with scowling faces.

"Well," said Nick, at last, "what's next on the programme?"

"Patrol wagon and station house," growled one of the men.

"And after that?" said Nick, pleasantly.

"Trial," growled the man. He was the smaller of the two, but seemed more intelligent than his companion.

"What next?" continued Nick, with a smile.

There was no answer.

"I'll tell you what comes next," said Nick, setting his jaw hard, "it's five or six years in State's prison."

"Gee!" muttered the bigger of the two, "I just finished up a two-year term there."

The other man grew angry.

"Look here," said he, "what's the use of keepin' us here this way, torturin' us. Yer licked us and we knows we're goin' ter jail. Ain't that enough? What are yer keepin' us here fer?"

"I'll tell you," said Nick, "I want to know the name of the man who hired you to do me up. Tell me that and I'll give you your money back, unlock that door and let you walk out. The police don't know anything about this yet.

"And if you won't tell me," Nick continued, speaking between his set teeth, "you know who I am, and I can promise you you'll be sorry you ever heard of me. You'll get all the punishment the law allows. You'll go to jail and stay there, and when you get through serving one sentence, there'll be another case against you. I'll look up every crib you've cracked and every cop you've slugged, since you were able to swing a sandbag, and you'll get time for every one of them."

Nick said this as though he meant it.

The outlook seemed to strike the men as a decidedly unpleasant one.

They glanced at each other inquiringly, and then the smaller one spoke:

"We'll tell you all we know, boss," he said.

"Me name is Crook, and me pal's name is Curry. We work 'round the docks fer a livin', but we're out o' work now. Early this mornin' a guy come along and asked us to do you up. He was a swell guy from Fifth Avenue; he wouldn't tell us his name, but he give us a hundred cash and told us you'd get here in a cab this mornin'. He didn't want you killed, he said, but he wanted you knocked out, so you'd stay quiet for five days. That's all. We didn't mean ter kill yer. Did we, Bill?"

"No, we didn't, boss," said Bill, "we meant ter knock yer out and lock yer up."

"Thanks for your kind intentions," said Nick, "describe the man who hired you."

"He was a tall feller, but slim," said Crook, "a swell dresser."

"He was a black-headed feller," added Bill, "a young lad, too, about twenty t'ree, I guess. Had a smooth face."

"I see," said Nick. "I guess you have told me the truth, and I'm going to let you go. Here's your money, but I'm going to keep these weapons of yours. You know it's against the law to carry concealed weapons."

"Thanks, boss. Much obliged," said the two, grasping at the money eagerly.

Nick unlocked the door and informed the bartender, who had been listening at the keyhole, as business was slack, that everything was all right.

"Now Crook and Curry," he said, "behave yourselves after this and don't let me run up against you again, or you'll land in jail."

The men hurried off, and Nick, after reloading his revolver, went off too.

"I have five days to catch my man in," he said to himself, "for that's the time during which the man must be kept out of the way. He must intend to leave the country, and the only thing he would wait five days to catch would be an ocean steamer. I'll get Chick to go around to the various steamship agencies."

Half an hour later, Nick was talking to Chick in his own office.

"I've got a pretty good idea who my man is," he said, after briefly recounting his adventures to Chick, "but I haven't any positive proof as yet. I'm going to go out on the case for myself. Patsy's at work on the other end of it. I think he's on a wild goose chase, but in a big case like this it won't do to leave a stone unturned."

"Then there doesn't seem to be much left for me to do," said Chick.

"You can look over the passenger lists of all the ocean steamers that set sail within the next five days," said Nick. "Call at the various agencies, present my card, and the agents will do anything they can for you."

Chick arose and put on his coat again.

"Very well," he said, "what name is it you want to find. It's a pretty hard thing to trail a crook that way. He could easily give an assumed name."

"He could," said Nick, "but the point is—would he? A criminal generally makes some mistake and he is liable to be very careless, especially if he thinks that no one suspects him of being the criminal. This man very likely took passage under his own name.

"If he didn't, I think I can land him anyway."

"All right," said Chick, "I'm ready. Tell me the name of your man."

"Here it is," said Nick, handing Chick a folded slip of paper, "you can read it when you get to the nearest steamship company's office."

Chick took the slip and left the house.

When he read the name written on it he was more surprised than he had been in a long time.

CHAPTER III.

A TALK WITH A BIG PAWNBROKER.

That afternoon Nick paid a visit to a man well known to the criminal classes of New York City.

This man, whose name is Thomas Hibson, is the largest pawnbroker in New York. Hibson himself never appeared at any of his stores. It is generally supposed that he is dead and that the business is carried on under his name.

There were only a few people in New York who knew that Tom Hibson was alive and well. Several of these were big criminals, who, at different times, had secured money from him in return for jewels, which they had stolen, and which it would have been dangerous, on account of their size, to pledge at any of his stores.

Another person who knew that Hibson was alive was the captain of the Detective Bureau of New York, who had often had dealings with the big pawnbroker in regard to stolen gems. He had strong suspicions—in fact he was morally certain that Hibson had, on more than one occasion, been the receiver of stolen goods; but he had no positive proof against him—the old pawnbroker being so cunning and crafty in all his transactions.

The only other person who knew anything about the whereabouts of Tom Hibson was Nick Carter.

He had often had dealings with him, similar to those of Captain Titus, and he knew some facts in regard to some of the recent big jewel robberies, in the city, of which even the captain of the Detective Bureau was ignorant.

Nick had information, carefully set forth in sworn affidavits, which would have made a pretty good case against Hibson as a receiver of stolen goods.

For reasons of his own he had never pressed these charges against the pawnbroker.

"Better keep them hanging over his head," thought Nick, "then I can scare him into telling me anything I want to know by threats of prosecution."

Nick's next move in the search for the missing Morgan jewels was to pay a visit to Hibson, the pawnbroker.

Hibson lived in a large, old-fashioned stone house, in a side street, off Second Avenue, in the lower part of the great east side of New York.

The house, fifty years before, had been one of the fashionable residences of the city.

It was a massive, square structure, built of dark stone, set in the middle of a garden surrounded by a high wall.

The neighborhood, which had once been a fashionable one, had grown to be one of the poorest in the city.

The old house was surrounded by factories and tenement houses, which towered high on all sides of it.

No one, of all the swarm of inhabitants of the nearby houses, suspected for a moment that any one lived in this gloomy old house.

It was the picture of desolation and decay. All the windows were shuttered up, the wood of the old-

fashioned shutters being weather beaten and decayed, but yet bound with strong iron bars and stout enough to withstand the most skillful burglar.

The garden was neglected—grown with weeds and half filled with rubbish, thrown into it by the inhabitants of the nearby tenements.

It was to this house that Nick took his way.

A ring at the jangling door-bell set the echoes flying all through the old house, and it was ten minutes later when the door was opened on creaking hinges and Nick was admitted.

The servant who let Nick in was an enormous negro, fully six feet four inches in height and broad to match, all brawn and muscle, and with one of the most hideous faces Nick had ever set eyes on.

The detective had seen this man half a dozen times before, but this time he seemed uglier, and bigger, and stronger than ever before, and Nick, for all his courage and experience, felt an uncomfortable thrill pass through him as he looked at his horrible countenance and immense frame.

The man was dressed entirely in black and his white eyeballs shone out with vivid distinctness in the dim hallway.

He was a deaf mute, as Nick knew, and as he believed, all the servants he had ever seen in the house were.

He was devoted to his master, and understood a gesture from him as well as most servants understood a spoken command.

This man recognized Nick, for his features were distorted into a horrible parody of a smile, and, carefully closing the door and bolting it, top and bottom, he signaled to the detective to follow him.

The interior of the house, in contrast to its neglected and gloomy exterior, was furnished in the most luxurious style.

Not a ray of sunlight was ever permitted to enter it, and swinging lights of brass and gilt cast a soft light over the broad-cushioned divans and the rich hangings on the walls.

Nick followed the negro through a hallway, carpeted with material of a soft texture that sank under his feet as he walked, and up a short flight of stairs into a large room, richly furnished, strewn with rugs of rare texture and lit by swinging incandescent lights—the room in which the master of the house spent the most of his time.

There was not a window in this room and the floors and walls were thickly padded, so that not a sound could escape from it.

The Oriental magnificence of the furniture may be partly explained by the fact that many of the articles in it were unredeemed pledges.

Frequently rich men deposited their possessions with the old pawnbroker in return for liberal loans of money at a liberal rate of interest.

Whenever they were unable to repay their loans, and thus gain their property again, the pawnbroker selected the choicest articles for his own home before selling the remainder, so this room was fitted with jewels and ornaments of every description.

Tom Hibson was seated at one end of this room, looking over a large volume of accounts, when Nick entered.

The servant vanished, closing the door behind him, without a sound, and, although Nick had been in the place before and looked around, just after the servant had disappeared he was unable to tell the position of the door, so cunningly had it been made to represent part of the upholstered wall of the apartment.

The pawnbroker arose to meet the detective.

He was a small, withered old man, with a head completely bald, and with dark, glittering eyes, which shone like coals of fire in his white, wrinkled face, which was so sunken, with either age or disease, as to show clearly the outline of the skull beneath.

He was dressed in black like his servant, and he greeted the detective with an ugly smile, or rather snarl, exhibiting the few yellow teeth which still remained to him.

"Eh, Mr. Carter, sit down, sit down. How are you, my old friend? Is your health good?"

He said this in a thin, squeaky voice that well suited his personality.

Nick sat down on a cushioned divan, and the pawnbroker did likewise.

Nick could not repress a shiver, although the air of the room was warm, almost to suffocation.

"I'm quite well, thank you," he said, "I've come to see you on a matter of business, Mr. Hibson."

"Business—always business," squeaked the usurer. "Why cannot you come and pay me a social call so that we may have a pleasant time together? Eh!—Mr. Carter?"

"God forbid," said Nick, under his breath, looking at the death's head face of the old man.

"The Hackett jewels have been stolen, and you have them in your possession," said Nick. "They were left with you this morning."

Nick grasped his revolver within his coat pocket and drew himself together as he made the charge.

He did not know what might be done in this lonely old house.

The old pawnbroker threw back his head and laughed.

"Nonsense, my dear Mr. Carter, nonsense. How can you prove such a statement?"

Nick had no proof when he entered the room, although he had a strong suspicion that the man who had stolen the jewels, whoever he might be, would place them in the hands of Hibson, the celebrated pawnbroker, at the very earliest opportunity.

But just as he had seated himself on the divan his quick, watchful eye had caught sight of something that made his heart beat quicker, although his face was as impassive as ever.

It was a little chamois case, which lay on the usurer's desk.

Nick had a description of this case in his pocket. In fact he had seen it once when the Hackett jewels were placed on exhibition at a charity fair.

It had contained a large crescent ruby, presented by an Indian prince to Mr. Hackett, and Nick recognized it in a moment.

He leaned forward with a quick movement, picked it up and held it in his hand.

"There is my proof, Mr. Hibson," he said.

Hibson saw that he was caught.

He started to his feet in a fit of coughing, and staggered toward the wall.

"What proof is that, eh, Mr. Carter?" he finally managed to say.

"Proof enough! It's the case which contains the Hackett ruby."

"The Hackett ruby. I know nothing of it, Mr. Carter."

"How did you get this, then?"

Nick was watching the pawnbroker closely.

There was a peculiar look in his eyes, and he was leaning heavily against the wall.

"I don't know how it came here, Mr. Carter."

Nick heard a rustle behind him.

The big negro who had admitted him had entered the room, accompanied by another negro nearly as large.

Nick arose and stepped back toward the wall.

"What are these men doing here?" he asked.

His hand was tightly grasping the hard rubber stock of his revolver within his coat pocket, and every muscle was tense.

"You know too much, Mr. Carter," said Hibson.

He looked at the two negroes and motioned with his hand toward Nick.

They started forward toward him.

Nick's revolver was out, and he fired.

As he did so the room was plunged in darkness.

The light had been turned out by the old pawnbroker, by switching a lever on his table.

Nick's shot had not stopped the rush.

He was borne back toward the wall.

He fought like a madman, although he could see nothing, but he was in the hands of two powerful men.

He fired again, but the revolver was twisted upward, so that the hot powder scorched his face and the smoke made him choke and cough.

The next moment the gun dropped from his hand.

Nick gritted his teeth as he was forced hard against the wall.

"Now for it," he said to himself, and with a great

effort he broke the grasps that had fastened on each of his wrists.

"Here's one for you," muttered Nick, as his left fist shot out into the darkness.

It hit something hard, and there was a heavy thud.

"One down and out," said Nick, "now for number two."

Number Two's hands had again grasped Nick's left wrist, so the detective, in spite of the darkness, knew pretty well where his head was.

His right came across and hit it with a jolt that jarred his arm to the shoulder.

Again Nick heard a heavy fall on the carpet and knew that his assailants were for the present, at least, out of the way.

His electric pocket lantern was out and lit in a moment.

He had a pretty good idea of the manner in which the electric lights were controlled, and in a few seconds had reached the table, found the switch, and turned on the lights.

The room was thick with powder smoke from the revolver, and the two negroes were lying unconscious on the floor.

At the other end of the room crouched Hibson, sheltering himself behind a table.

Nick's revolver lay on the floor before him. He picked it up and covered the pawnbroker.

"No more of that work," he said, "or you'll get perforated."

"Don't shoot, Mr. Carter—it was an accident."

"It was a murderous assault," said Nick, "I could have you and your men in jail for this, and I will if you don't tell me all you know."

"I have not the jewels, now."

"Where are they?"

"In the Equitable Safe Deposit vaults. I put them there as soon as I received them. The man wanted to sell them to me, but I refused to buy them, knowing they had been stolen. I agreed, for a consideration, to put them in storage for him and return them to him at the end of five days."

"Who gave them to you?"

"I can't tell you—a dark young man—he absolutely refused to give his name."

"Why didn't he put them in the Safe Deposit vaults himself?"

"He was afraid he would be detected. He said he was prominent, socially, and that the official at the vaults would recognize him, and he was afraid to keep them on his person."

"When are you to return them to him?"

"Next Monday I am to get them, and he will meet me on the street in front of the Equitable Safe Deposit building and take them from me."

"What time of day are you to meet him?"

"Ten in the morning."

The pawnbroker was shaking with fear and scarcely able to articulate with terror.

His eyes were continually fixed on the barrel of Nick's revolver. The detective believed that he had told him the truth.

"I could easily put you in jail," said Nick, "but in view of the information given and the fact that your servants are in pretty bad trim, I'll not press any charge against you. Let me out of here."

It was Hibson himself who led the way to the street door and opened it for Nick.

"I have no time to bother with your case to-day," said Nick, as he left Hibson, "but look out for me the next time you run up against me."

Ten minutes later the detective was at his office. Chick was awaiting him there, and there was a yellow envelope containing a telegram, addressed to Nick, on the table.

"Your man sails for Bremen, Monday morning," said Chick.

"Registered under his own name, eh?"

"His name is down in full—no trouble finding it."

"What ship?"

"*Kaiserin Maria Theresa*, North German Lloyd Line, leave Atlantic Street, Brooklyn, at 4 P. M."

"We've got our man. To-day is Thursday, so we've got four days yet," said Nick. "We'll catch him sure on Monday. Now let's see what this telegram is."

He opened it and read it. The telegram was as follows:

"Got the man who pinched the jewels. I'm in a tight place. Come to Thirty-sixth Street and Sixth Avenue, quick. PATSY."

CHAPTER IV.

PATSY GOES UP AGAINST IT.

The clew given Patsy to trail the burglar, who entered the Hackett house, would have meant little to the ordinary detective.

A small piece of chewed-up cloth doesn't look promising as a clew. So thought Patsy.

Patsy was no ordinary detective, however, and, though young, he had gone through a good schooling in Carter methods of detective work.

His first move was to visit the detective's office and get into a suitable disguise.

An hour later the hangers-on in a low saloon off Chatham Square, saw an unusually tough-looking young man hanging over the bar.

His battered derby was down over his eyes, his coat collar was turned up, his clothes were faded and frayed, and the stump of a black cigar projected from his undershot jaw.

"Set 'em up fer the bunch, cull," he said to the bartender, "blow ther crowd. I just landed a good haul."

There was a scramble for a moment, and then the bar was lined with an aggregation of citizens that would have given the chief of police a nightmare to look at.

"What did yer cop, pard?" asked a toothless, thickset individual, who had found a place at the young man's elbow.

The young man removed his face from a schooner of beer and pulled out a roll of bills as thick as a stove pipe.

"Snatched it from a guy in Wall Street, see? Set 'em up again, bartender."

There were three rounds of drinks passed over the bar, and then the young man went to a table, accompanied by three of the toughest specimens in the place, and sat down.

"Hear about the Hackett house bein' cracked open?" said the young man; "fellow that cracked it got caught. It's in de papers already."

"Nit," said the toothless man. "I know who done that, Jimmy Maquire did that, and he didn't git caught either."

"What'll you bet he ain't caught," said the young man.

"I ain't bettin'."

"Yer bluffin', yer can't kid me like that. Jimmy Maquire's in de pen all right."

"Like h—ll. He's laid up in the saloon on West Thirty-sixth Street. He got his leg chewed up by a dog."

"Yer can't stuff me, cull; have another drink," and the young man rose unsteadily to his feet, threw down a bill and staggered out of the saloon.

"Whew!" said Patsy, as he reached the corner, "that's a tough hole. The air in there is a little rich for my blood. I think I'll land my man, though."

Three-quarters of an hour later Patsy entered a saloon on Thirty-sixth Street, west of Sixth Avenue.

There were a crowd of men in front of the bar, but Patsy pushed past them into the back room, where he heard hoarse voices engaged in conversation.

Patsy stood at the door looking the men over.

At length one of them arose to get a match for his pipe.

As he stepped out from the table, Patsy noticed that he limped.

He also noticed that one leg of the man's trousers was torn and that the limb within appeared to be swathed in bandages.

The man himself was thickset, bull-necked and unshaven.

Patsy stepped outside the door and looked at the piece of chewed cloth, which he carried in his pocket.

"I've got him," said he, and then he listened.

"That's a pretty game leg you've got, Maquire," said a voice.

"Yes," growled Maquire. "I'll kill the bulldog that give it to me yet."

This was enough for Patsy.

The stealer of the Hackett diamonds, he thought, was in his grasp.

"I'd be crazy to tackle him now," said Patsy, "I guess I'll send a telegram for Nick and watch the guy to see he don't get away."

Patsy sent the telegram, and then took up a post where he could watch both doors of the saloon.

He had a long wait, but his detective training had taught him patience.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon the man Patsy had identified as Maquire emerged from the saloon, accompanied by another man.

They both looked at Patsy suspiciously, and at length approached him.

"Wot yer hangin' around here fer?" asked Maquire.

"No place else ter go," said Patsy.

"Well git, quick," said Maquire.

"Not on your life," said Patsy, "I want to talk to you first."

Maquire glanced up and down the street.

It was generally deserted through the middle of the day, notwithstanding the fact that it was in the heart of the city, and there was no one on the block save Patsy and the two men.

Maquire drew his companion aside and spoke to him in a whisper.

"That's a fly-cop after me, I'll bet," he said. "We'll put him down that manhole."

The manhole Maquire referred to was an opening, connecting with the sewer, about four feet in width.

The street was being repaired and was closed to traffic, and the manhole had been left without any covering.

Patsy did not hear what Maquire said, and had paid little attention to the manhole.

"Come over here, cull. I want ter talk wid yer," said Maquire, walking out in the middle of the street.

Patsy followed, his hands on the pair of handcuffs he carried, ready to slip on Maquire's hands.

Crack! something hit the boy over the head, and he staggered.

The next moment he had disappeared from view into the manhole, and the two men turned hurriedly to go back to the saloon.

At that moment two other men dashed around the corner.

"He's down the manhole, Chick; try and get help. I'll attend to these scoundrels," called the foremost, as he dashed at Maquire and his companion.

It was Nick Carter and Chick.

They had come in answer to Patsy's telegram, but had come too late, so far as Patsy was concerned.

CHAPTER V.

PATSY LOOPS THE LOOP.

When Patsy had walked over to Maquire, ready to slip the handcuffs on his hands, he had not noticed the open manhole nearby.

He was so engrossed in his own plan for catching Maquire that for a moment he was off his guard.

It was a mistake that Nick would never have made.

Patsy realized this in a flash, as the blow from behind landed on his head.

It did not knock him out, for the boy had a thick skull, but it sent him reeling and staggering toward the manhole.

He tried hard to keep from falling in, to grasp at the sides, but he was dazed from the blow and shot down into the black hole.

Splash!

Patsy was under water. It was in his nose, mouth and ears—vile tasting and muddy.

He felt himself whirled along in the swift current that seemed to force him deeper and deeper under water.

He struggled and fought to reach the top.

He felt as though his lungs would burst, while horrible pains shot through his head.

"It's all up with me," thought Patsy, but still he struggled to bring himself to the surface.

Suddenly his head shot above the water and he drew in a good breath of air.

It was anything but fresh air, being foul with sewer gas, but to Patsy it seemed delightful.

The detective was whirling along in a rushing current that seemed to travel with breakneck speed.

There was no question of seeing where he was or where he was going.

It was as black as night in the sewer.

The noise of the rushing water was deafening. Patsy struck out swimming along with the current.

"It's no use to swim against it," he thought, "and I won't give up while I can move."

Crash!

Patsy had struck something. His head felt as if it had been run through a carpet beating machine.

He was plunged under water again, whirled around, bumped against something hard again, and then hurried on by the current in a new direction.

"That's where we turned a corner," thought Patsy, as he forced his head above water again. "Lucky for me the roof of this sewer's high enough to give me some breathing space."

Bump!

The detective had struck something floating on the water.

He could see nothing, but it felt like an empty tomato crate.

He went down under it and came up on the other side.

He was dazed and dizzy as he felt the hot blood trickle from a gash on his cheek, but he still struck out boldly to keep his head above water.

Another bump showed the detective that he had now run against a log of wood.

He seemed to be whirling along at a terrible speed.

The water was thick with floating objects of all descriptions.

The air grew closer and closer, and the roaring of the water grew louder and louder in Patsy's ears.

He knew what that meant.

The roof of the sewer was coming down lower.

He was dizzy. Bright flashes of light shot before his eyes.

Every moment, almost, his head sank under the water, and he was choking and spluttering constantly.

Louder and louder grew the roaring noise.

Then something struck Patsy's head from above.

It was a projection from the roof of the sewer, and it left a big scalp wound.

The boy sank under the water, fighting for life as pluckily as ever.

* * * * * * *

Patsy has never been able to describe what followed. A deafening roar in his ears, a terrible pressure of the water on all sides of him, were all he was conscious of.

He seemed to be plunging deeper and deeper. Then he was shot forward like an arrow from a bow, and then he suddenly came to a standstill.

He struggled to reach the top of the water, and, finally, came up with a rush.

He was in the open air somewhere.

It had stopped raining, and the sun was shining brightly on the water so that it blinded Patsy, whose eyes had become used to the darkness.

When he did blink them open again, he was not long in finding out where he was.

Patsy had traveled down the sewer, running under Sixth Avenue, had turned into the main lateral sewer that runs under West Twenty-eighth Street, and was now in the North River.

A few feet to one side of Patsy was a tugboat steaming slowly up the river.

The name, *Comet*, was painted on its stern.

"Comet ahoy!" yelled he at the top of his lungs. "Comet ahoy! Take me aboard. I'm in the river off your starboard bow."

His cries were heard.

In an instant the tug slowed up, came about and Patsy was harpooned through the coat with a boat hook and dragged aboard the tug, bleeding and battered, but still in the ring.

"What kind of a fool be ye to go in swimming this time of year?" said the deck hand.

"Swimming, nothing," shouted Patsy, leaping to his feet, as he remembered that he was still on the track of Maquire, the burglar.

"I've just had a ride through the Twenty-eighth Street sewer. I'm a detective and want to get off and go to Thirty-sixth Street as quick as this tug can put me there.

"Hey, cap, leave me off at Thirty-sixth Street and you get a ten-dollar bill," he bawled, looking up at the man in the little pilot house of the tug.

"I'll put yer there," called down the captain.

The tug swung around. A bell rang, and a full head of steam was turned on.

A few minutes later the tug bumped its nose against the bulkhead of the dock at the foot of West Thirty-sixth Street.

Patsy flung a ten-dollar bill on the deck, leaped for the string piece of the bulkhead, caught it with one hand, swung for a moment, and then, gathering his strength together, pulled himself up on the dock.

The captain and deck hands of the *Comet* gazed at him, their jaws dropped and their eyes bulging with admiration.

There was a big liner being unloaded at the dock.

The place was crowded with stevedores and longshoremen, wheeling loaded trucks down the dock and empty ones back.

Hatless, dripping and mud covered, with a big gash across his face, Patsy pushed his way through the crowd.

Every one he passed looked at him in astonishment.

One watchman tried to stop him to ask him his business.

He received a shove on the chest that tumbled him over a pile of hides which had just been unloaded from the ship.

Before he could regain his feet, Patsy was out at the end of the dock, in a cab, and whirling over Sixth Avenue at breakneck speed.

There was a crowd of perhaps fifty or sixty persons gathered around the manhole at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Thirty-sixth Street, and in the center of the crowd was Nick and also Chick, holding as prisoners Maquire and the man who had helped him knock Patsy down the manhole.

An expert from the Department of Docks and Sewers had been sent for and had just emerged from the manhole, into which he had lowered a ladder.

"Any man that went into that sewer is drowned long ago," he was saying to Nick, when a cab whirled up, scattering the crowd in all directions.

Out of it sprang a dilapidated, water-soaked person, who ran up to Maquire and laid hands on him.

"Patsy!" exclaimed Nick and Chick together.

They had almost given up all hope of ever seeing their young assistant again, and it was a glad surprise to them.

Patsy was choking for want of breath.

"Here's the man that stole the Morgan jewels," he finally articulated, keeping tight hold of Maquire "I've just looped the loop. I came back by way of the river."

There was a deafening cheer from the crowd. Patsy's pluck was appreciated.

"Let's move on to the station house," said Nick.

There was a triumphal procession to the police station on West Thirtieth Street, led by the three Carters and their two prisoners.

At the door the crowd was scattered and the prisoners were taken inside.

Maquire's companion, who had struck Patsy the blow from behind, was promptly charged with felonious assault and locked up immediately.

Then Maquire was led before the sergeant's desk and gave his name and address.

"What's the charge?" asked the sergeant.

"Burglary," said Patsy.

"Don't put that down, sergeant," said Nick, with a smile.

Then he turned to Patsy.

"How do you know he committed burglary?" he asked.

Patsy dragged a piece of cloth from his pocket and placed it against Maquire's trouser leg.

"The bulldog bit it out of that leg," he said. "Maquire's the man who took the Hackett jewels."

"I think not," said Nick.

"What?" cried Patsy, "not the man?"

"No, not the man; he's the man that broke into the house, and it wasn't his fault that he didn't steal the jewels—only he didn't steal them."

"Well, I have made a fool of myself," said Patsy, biting his lip.

"No, you haven't," said Nick, "you got the man you went after. Maquire deserves locking up all right, and it is our duty to look him up, only we are after bigger game in regard to the Hackett jewel robbery."

Patsy hung his head. He had never experienced a more bitter disappointment.

He had no idea of placing his judgment against Nick's.

If Nick said that Maquire did not steal the Hackett jewels, that was all there was to it.

"I was up against it for fair," he muttered, as Maquire, after being charged with attempted burglary and assault, was led away to a cell.

CHAPTER VI.

A THREE-CORNERED CHASE.

At twenty minutes to ten o'clock on the Monday morning following Patsy's adventure in the sewer, people who were in the habit of buying their newspapers, magazines and cigars at the stand situated on the ground floor of the big Equitable Safe Deposit Company's building on lower Broadway, noticed that the proprietor of the news stand there had a new assistant.

He was a tall, well-built young man, and would have been good-looking, only for the fact that there was a big cut across one of his cheeks, which was only partially healed.

Only one of the many elevators in the building was running that morning, owing to some accident to the machinery—at least that is what the manager of the building said was the matter.

The man who ran this elevator was also unfamiliar to those who knew the building best.

He was apparently a very old man, bent and shabbily dressed, and wearing a long, white beard.

He was kept busy taking the people up to the various offices above, but he found time for a moment to step over to the young man in charge of the news stand and speak to him in low tones.

"Is Nick here yet, Patsy?" he asked.

"Yes," was the reply, "he's hanging around outside. He'll be in here and give us both a sign when the man we are to watch comes in."

"You remember what our orders are?" said Chick.

"Yes," said Patsy. "Watch the man Hibson from the time he gets the package he has deposited here. Do you think he intends to try and pass it to some one in the crowd?"

"That's what Nick says he will do. He told Nick he was going to get the stuff out to-day, and, of course, he knows he'll be watched, so he'll try to cheat us. Nick had all the other elevators stopped so that we might be sure of keeping track of him when he went up and down."

"Right," said Patsy, and Chick darted back to his elevator.

A moment later, Hibson, the pawnbroker, with whom Nick had had an interesting interview in regard to the Hackett jewels, entered the building.

He had come for the purpose of getting the jewels out and returning them to the man who had turned them over to him for safe keeping.

As Hibson entered the crowded corridor of the building a bootblack, carrying box and brushes, followed him.

This bootblack was an Italian, if one might judge by appearances, and he had a pair of shoulders that would have been the envy of any heavy-weight prize fighter who had seen him.

As Hibson reached the elevator and entered it with uncertain steps, the bootblack stopped midway between the door of the elevator and the news stand.

His box and brushes fell from his hands with a crash on the pavement.

"G'wan, ye dago," said the young man at the news stand.

"Ye don't go up in dis here elevator," said the elevator man, "this is for tenants."

He closed the sliding door with a bang and shot his elevator down toward the basement, just as the Italian attempted to enter it.

There was a laugh from several people in the corridor at the bootblack's discomfiture.

The apparent Italian picked up his scattered brushes and blacking bottles without a word, and left the building.

The Italian was Nick Carter, and he had just given his assistants a sign as to the man they were to watch.

"Now both Chick and Patsy know the man they've got to watch and I'll watch here on the street," he muttered as he reached the sidewalk.

"If Hibson succeeds in passing that package to any one without our finding out who he is, he's a corker, and if the thief doesn't turn up to claim the jewels it's easy enough to keep track of Hibson for a day or two."

Broadway is generally crowded at ten in the morning, and the Equitable Safe Deposit building was as crowded as such large office buildings generally are during business hours.

The Carters had no easy task in watching Hibson, for, after getting the jewels in the office of the Safe Deposit Company in the basement of the building, he might easily pass them to any one he had appointed to meet either among the crowds in the elevator, in the corridor, or on the street.

The man who received the package from him was the man Nick was after—the man who had stolen the jewels, and Nick had posted his two assistants in good positions for watching Hibson as he came down in the elevator and left the building.

When Hibson left the office of the Safe Deposit Company the elevator was waiting at the basement, and Chick, the disguised elevator man, was standing beside it.

He had been watching Hibson while in the office and saw him place the package he received in his coat pocket.

With Hibson, a tall, elderly gentleman, wearing a frock coat and silk hat, left the office of the company. Together they entered the elevator.

Chick watched Hibson closely as he went up.

As Chick watched, letting the elevator ascend very slowly, the well-dressed stranger stepped for a moment in front of Hibson, facing Chick.

A moment later he drew a handkerchief from one of his coattail pockets and wiped his gold-mounted eyeglasses.

When the elevator reached the ground floor, the stranger drew back, courteously allowing Hibson to pass out first.

This placed him very near Chick.

The detective slipped one hand against the man's coattails.

He could distinctly feel the outline of a hard, square object like a box, through the cloth.

That was enough for Chick.

He turned the elevator over to one of the employees of the place, who had been sent to relieve him at ten o'clock, by the manager of the building, who was acting under Nick's instructions, slipped on a hat which was lying in the elevator and followed the man in the tall hat to the street.

Meanwhile Patsy had his eyes glued on Hibson, paying no attention to what Chick was doing.

He knew that his business was to watch Hibson, no matter what the other two Carters did.

Hibson stopped at the stand to look at the staring headlines on a newspaper, and, as he did so, a young man in a bicycle suit jostled against him, and, after apologizing, walked on.

Patsy could see a cardboard box sticking out of one of the side pockets in the young man's Norfolk coat, after he had passed.

After speaking a hurried sentence to the proprietor of the stand, who was seated behind the cigar counter, Patsy followed in the trail of the young man.

Meanwhile Hibson slowly hobbled down the steps of the building to the street.

A tall man, with a heavy beard, wearing a reefer jacket and looking generally like a seafaring man,

dashed up the steps at the same time, nearly knocking the old man over.

He caught him in his arms and set him on his feet, then went on into the building, buttoning up his loose love rector, which had been flying open to the winds.

Five minutes later he emerged from the building and started at a brisk walk down Broadway, followed by the bootblack, who had been hanging around the building all the morning, and who had gotten rid of his kit in some way.

CHAPTER VII.

WHO GOT THE JEWELS?

Both Chick and Patsy started off sleuthing the men they had spotted, with high hopes of catching the stealer of the Hackett jewels.

Each thought that he had spotted the right man.

The man Chick followed was as respectable-looking a gentleman as you could meet in a month of Sundays.

His frock coat was immaculate, and his stove pipe hat glittered like an advertisement for shoe polish.

"No use judging from appearances," thought Chick, and he dogged his footsteps like a bloodhound.

He boarded a Madison Avenue car.

The man got off at Fortieth Street and started up the brownstone stoop of a house, on which was a sign bearing the inscription, "Alvir Merriweather, M. D."

Chick ran up the steps after him and laid his hand upon his arm.

"Pardon me," he said, "but would you mind telling me your name?"

The man looked at Chick, who appeared to him to be an aged and rather shabbily dressed individual.

"Not in the least," he said. "I am Dr. Alvir Merriweather. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"There is," said Chick.

"Ah," said Dr. Merriweather, "heart trouble, possibly. Step inside."

He opened the door with a latch key and led the way into a consulting-room.

"Sit down," he said, "and let me feel your pulse."

"I'm a detective," said Chick, "and I want to talk to you."

"Ah, a detective, a-hum," said the doctor, laying aside his glittering stove-pipe, "a very exciting occupation—especially for an old man. You should retire, sir, retire. You need a vacation, sir—a trip to Palm Beach, Florida. I think it not unlikely that you have an aortic aneurism."

"He'll have an aortic aneurism himself before I get through with him," muttered Chick, under his breath.

"I will now proceed to examine you," said the doctor, drawing a stethoscope from his breast pocket.

"I want to examine you first," said Chick, standing up.

The doctor started back, nearly dropping his stethoscope.

"Police," he muttered. "Do you have these delusions often?"

"I simply want to look at the package you have in your coattail pocket," said Chick. "I'm on the trail of some valuable jewels that are missing. I'm not sick, I'm here on detective business. I followed you from the Equitable building."

The doctor grew very red in the face.

"What I have in that pocket," he said, "is a matter er—of—er—a peculiarly personal nature."

"I'll have to see it or put you under arrest," said Chick, developing a revolver.

The doctor was startled.

"Please point the muzzle of that instrument the other way," he said.

Chick complied with his request, and then started through the doctor's pockets.

He drew forth from the coattail pocket the package he had left through the curtain in the elevator. He looked at it for a moment, and then cast it on the table in disgust.

It was a small, square-shaped bottle bearing a label, marked "Schnelum Schnapps."

The doctor was evidently a believer in stimulants and carried the bottle around with him to stimulate himself from whatever he felt it necessary.

"I owe you an apology," said Chick, to the crimson-

faced doctor; "I thought that what you had in your pocket was of an entirely different nature."

"I should think you did!" said the doctor, restoring his property to its original place. "Do you take me for a thief?"

"Not now," said Chick, reaching for his hat. "I ask you if you are acquainted with a man named Hibson?"

"Never heard of him," said the doctor, with emphasis.

"Good-day."

"Good-day."

Chick started back for Nick's office, feeling that, if it had remained for him alone to find the Hackett jewels, they would never be found.

"Still," he thought, "that's why three of us were there, so that we could watch every possible person to whom the jewels might have been passed. Nick's sure to nail the right man. I would bet a good deal that Patsy followed the wrong steer as well."

He would have won his bet in regard to Patsy.

He found that young gentleman seated in Nick's office with a big cigar in his mouth, and a very gloomy countenance.

"What luck, Patsy?" queried Chick.

"Rotten!" said Patsy. "I followed a kid with a package in his pocket; it turned out to be a patent, compressible bicycle pump instead of the Hackett jewels."

"What did you follow him for?"

"I saw him jostle old Hibson, and I thought that he had got the package from him. What luck did you have?"

"No better than yours. I insulted a nice, respectable doctor, so he'll never forgive me."

"We're a nice team," said Patsy.

"Cheer up, Patsy," said Chick. "Nick's out on the trail and he doesn't go off on any wrong steers. He seems to jump right at a thief by instinct."

Patsy didn't cheer up, however, and he and Chick sat together in gloomy silence for nearly an hour.

Then they were aroused by a ring at the bell.

A uniformed boy entered, bearing a telegram addressed to Chick.

Chick tore it open and spread it out for Patsy to read.

It was as follows:

"Come immediately to Signal Station, No. 2, on Old Sea Beach Railroad in South Brooklyn NICK."

"Hurrah," yelled Patsy. "He's got him. Get a move on, Chick."

CHAPTER VIII.

NICK'S GREAT JUMP.

Nick, in the disguise of an Italian, had followed a tall man, with bushy whiskers and a reefer jacket from the Equitable Safe Deposit building on Broadway.

The man in the reefer jacket hailed a cab.

"I must be at Atlantic Street, Brooklyn, to catch a steamer at ten-thirty," he said. "Get me there in time and you get fifty dollars."

He leaped in and the cab rattled down Broadway at breakneck speed, followed closely by another cab, in which was the Italian bootblack.

The cab the man with the beard and reefer had taken had the better horse, and, in spite of all the efforts of the second cabman, he could not overtake it.

It reached the ferry at the Battery to Atlantic Street, Brooklyn, just as a boat was leaving.

The cab dashed in before the gates were closed, and, by the time the second cab reached the ferryhouse, the boat was in midstream.

"Ten minutes start," said Nick Carter, leaping out of the cab and handing the driver a bill. "I won't need you any more; you did the best you could."

"Thank you, sir, thank you," said the driver, touching his hat.

During the next ten minutes Nick consulted the clock in the ferryhouse more times than he had looked at a clock in the past week.

At last the boat came in.

"Ten-thirty now," said Nick, "the time at which the boat sails. If I miss her I'll follow her to Sandy Hook on a tug."

He reached the North German Lloyd pier, in Brooklyn, just as the steamer was drawing out of the slip.

All the gang planks were off, and the big liner was slowly slipping out into the East River.

A crowd of men and women, as well as numerous parties in carriages, were streaming from the docks, after having seen the steamer start. Nick had to push his way through that throng.

He got clear of them finally and started on a run toward the end of the dock.

The *Kaiserin* was gathering momentum and moving faster and faster.

In a moment more it would be clear of the slip.

"Where ye goin'?" bawled a watchman, as Nick dashed past him.

He received no reply.

Another watchman started to head Nick off in his race for the end of the dock.

He got a reply in the shape of a right-hander that he felt for a week.

As Nick reached the bulkhead, the great stern of the *Kaiserin* was just clearing it.

The deck was six feet above the level of the dock, but there was an iron pipe protruding from a hole in the side near the stern a few feet below the level of the dock.

"Now or never," muttered Nick, as he drew back for a running jump.

"It's a good twenty feet, but I'll make it."

There was a chorus of warning shouts, and a rush of dockhands toward Nick, but they were all too late.

The detective's lithe form shot through the air and he caught the projecting iron pipe with both hands.

It came from the engine-room, from one of the great boilers.

It was hot with escaping steam and burned the detective's hands.

Nick didn't care for that, however.

There was a rope hanging nearby, and Nick, after testing it, let go the hot pipe and swung by the rope.

By this time the *Kaiserin Maria Theresa* was in midstream and steaming down toward the Narrows.

There had been an uproar of yells from the bystanders on the dock when Nick made his great jump, but no one on board seemed to understand what it meant and certainly no one saw the figure of the detective swing by a rope under the stern.

Nick was a good enough gymnast to climb fifty feet by rope, hand over hand.

This time his climb to the deck was a little more than fifteen, and, although the overhang of the stern of the ship added a great deal of difficulty to the feat, Nick swung himself up, and, as the great vessel, with a blast from her whistle, turned into the upper bay, he drew himself over the bulwarks and leaped upon the deck.

CHAPTER IX.

OVERBOARD.

When Nick jumped on the deck of the *Kaiserin Maria Theresa*, the majority of the cabin passengers were gathered at the railing at the other side of the ship, looking at the shores of New York and Brooklyn, which they were leaving for a transatlantic voyage.

An officer and two or three of the passengers, however, saw Nick climb over, and it was not long before he was surrounded by curious people and answering the questions of a tall, blond-bearded, German-looking, man, the second mate of the *Kaiserin Maria Theresa*.

Nick was in a hurry to get the handcuffs on the hands of the tall man in the reefer, who had boarded the *Kaiserin*, and whom Nick was now sure was the man who had stolen the Hackett jewels, given them to Hibson for safe keeping, and, at the last minute, received them from him on the steps of the Equitable Safe Deposit building with the intention of taking them to Bremen, to which the *Kaiserin* was bound.

Nick felt that his case was about completed.

He could have made Hibson turn the jewels over to him and tell him who had given them to him if he had chosen to do so.

That was not Nick's way, however.

He wanted to catch the criminal red-handed with the jewels in his possession.

Then there would be no question of proving his guilt in a trial of the court.

Nick liked to land his man with such clear proofs that there would be no question as to his guilt.

He seldom made an arrest on suspicion, and never looked up a suspect until he had almost positive proof that he was the guilty man.

The man he was after was on board the *Kaiserin*, and Nick was naturally a little impatient when he was detained from searching the ship by a burly man with brass buttons, who insisted on cross-questioning him in broken English.

"I tell you, Mr. Officer, that I am Nick Carter, the detective—there's a burglar on board your ship, and I want to search it for him and take him off at Quarantine."

There was a murmur of amazement among the crowd of passengers that had gotten about Nick, and every one strained a little nearer to get a look at the celebrated detective.

"Vere vas your batch?" said the second mate.

"My badge!" said Nick. "I don't carry a badge when I'm disguised. It would give me away."

"Vell, ve haf a man on board who haf seen Nick Carter," said the officer. "He haf tol me of it. Dr. Schloss, our surgeon. He vill identify you if you speak der truth."

"All right," said Nick, "trot out Dr. Schloss, but first let me wash this stain off my face. I look too like an Italian now for my own brother to know me."

Nick was taken down to a state-room, performed his toilet, and came forth a new man.

Dr. Schloss recognized him immediately.

Nick remembered the doctor, as he had consulted him in regard to a case some time before, and Nick was treated to a round of handshaking by passengers, officers, and the captain, and invited to dinner, lunch, tea and several rounds of drinks by as many different people.

He refused all the invitations, however.

"I must get right to business," he said.

"I want to see all the cabin passengers."

The passengers were all hustled in the main saloon and Nick glanced at each one.

He failed to find the man he was looking for.

"I'm looking for a tall man with whiskers and a reefer coat," he said.

"I know who he is," said one of the stewards. "He came aboard at the last minute and went to his state-room. He's there now."

Nick started for the cabin indicated.

The door was open and a stewardess was brushing it out.

"The gentleman has just gone on deck," she said.

Nick dashed up on deck, followed by a group of excited people.

There, gazing over the railing toward the water front of South Brooklyn, which the ship was now passing, stood the man he was looking for.

Nick went up to him and tapped him on the shoulders.

"Better come out of your disguise now and turn over those jewels you have in the breast pocket of your reefer," he said, coolly.

The man half turned, started violently, and staggered back against the bulwarks.

He seemed to be struck powerless.

Leaning back against the bulwarks, he allowed Nick to unbutton his reefer and take from an inner pocket a long, heavy package, without making a movement to prevent him.

"Gentlemen," said Nick, holding the package in his

hands, "these are the famous jewels of which you have heard so much.

"Dr. Schloss, I'll turn them over to you while I handcuff this man."

These words seemed to fill the man with sudden fury.

He sprang upon Nick like a wildcat, snatched the package from his hand, and leaped to the top of the railing at a bound.

"I may drown, but you'll never get the jewels," he cried, thrusting the package back in his reefer jacket.

Nick made a grasp for his legs, but the young man had leaped already.

He made a magnificent dive and struck the water head on with a splash.

A moment later his head appeared above the waves well to the stern of the liner, which was now sweeping along at a good pace.

A bell was rung to stop the engines, but Nick did not wait for that.

CHAPTER X.

A HOT FINISH.

Nick stood for a second watching the fugitive, who seemed to be a good swimmer, and who was striking out with bold, overhand strokes, for the Brooklyn shore.

Then he kicked his shoes off and plunged over the rail.

There was a cheer from those on the *Kaiserin* as his head appeared above the waters and another cheer, as, after shaking the water from his eyes, he struck out after the fugitive.

The order had been given to the engineer of the *Kaiserin* to go ahead again, for much as the captain wished to watch the exciting thief hunt, he did not dare to run behind on his schedule.

He thought of lowering a boat to aid the detective in his chase and many of the passengers asked him to do so, but then he reflected that it was not his business to catch criminals.

So he steamed on out to sea, with everybody on the ship straining their eyes at the two black heads bobbing in the glittering waters of the bay.

It was a swim of half a mile to the Brooklyn shore.

Nick saw that his quarry had headed for the slip of the ferry from New York to Thirty-ninth Street, Brooklyn, and he followed with a strong, double overhand stroke, fighting hard against the tide which was running out.

Several passing craft hailed both swimmers.

The man with the whiskers paid no attention to any one, but plunged ahead doggedly.

Nick saved his breath also.

His blood was up now, and he wanted help from no one in his capture of the criminal, whoever he was.

He wanted to take him single-handed and alone, and he was determined to do so at all hazards.

He was gaining on the fugitive, but the man had a good start and was nearing the land. A moment later Nick saw him swim into the ferry slip, in which there was no boat at that time.

Nick redoubled his efforts as he saw the thief dragged out of the water by two of the attendants at the ferryhouse.

The fugitive appeared to speak to these men for a second, and then hurriedly disappeared.

Two minutes later Nick was dragged out of the slip by the same two men.

"Where's that man you just hauled out of here?" was his question as he set foot on dry land.

"He went over to the yards there," said one of the men. "Wouldn't wait to talk to us, or nothing. Wouldn't even give his name. Who is he?"

Nick didn't hear this question. He had dashed

away like an arrow on hearing the direction that his man had taken, leaving the two men glaring after him in anger.

"The yards," spoken of by the men, is a railroad yard at the foot of Thirty-ninth Street, Brooklyn, with tracks running up inland to connect with the Long Island Railroad system.

The company that built this branch railroad failed and the railroad is not in use, except when cars that are out of commission are taken down it to be stored in the terminal at the foot of Thirty-ninth Street.

Nick turned into the old railroad yard and saw his man skipping over the tracks a hundred feet away.

A locomotive had just brought a train of old cars into the terminal, had been uncoupled, and was standing puffing on the track.

The man with the whiskers leaped into it, shoved the engineer out, and threw open the throttle.

The engine jumped along the track.

Nick saw his man's move—for a moment it looked as if the man might get away.

There were several teams of horses in the yards.

They had been used by a contractor, who had been carting stone to make some alteration in the ferry-house, and one of them, a wiry, rangy broncho, was eating his noonday meal a few feet from Nick, tied by a halter to a post.

Nick leaped to his back and dug his heels into his side, seizing the halter from the post.

With a wild snort the animal leaped forward.

Nick had a good grip on the halter and yanked his head around hard.

The broncho started up a long railroad track running up through a deep cut.

On the track parallel to this the engine was jumping along twenty feet ahead of Nick.

"If I don't catch that engine before it gets fully started I'll never get it," said the detective.

He drove his heels hard into the white sides of the horse, gripped fast with his knees, and laid the end of the halter across the animal's head in a stinging blow.

The white horse shot forward like an arrow, mad with terror.

It was gaining on the engine.

"Hike it along," yelled Nick, "now or never."

Crack!

The heavy halter again struck the maddened horse.

It was flying like the wind now, and through the cut close beside the puffing, rumbling engine.

The locomotive was getting up speed now, and the horse did not seem to be able to gain an inch.

Crack! crack!

Nick struck it blow after blow with the end of the rope halter.

There was a fresh burst of speed. The horse gained an inch or two and then Nick had leaped from its back and was swinging by his hands from the cab of the engine.

The criminal had seen Nick coming.

He struck at the detective's hands with a shovel, trying to make him loose his hold, but his blows were wild owing to his excitement, and Nick hung on to the swinging cab like grim death.

Then he dragged himself on to it. The man in the reefer striking him time after time with the heavy shovel.

He could not stop Nick.

Bleeding from several wounds and nearly stunned, Nick staggered at him, grappled with him, and the two fell on the floor of the swaying cab.

Nick raised himself on his knee, reached for the throttle, and shut off the steam.

The engine began to slow down, but there was a struggle going on inside that would have made the fiercest prize fight seem like a tame affair.

The stealer of the diamonds was fighting like a demon, but he was in the grip of a man who had crushed the fight out of hundred of stronger men than he.

As the engine came to a standstill, the handcuffs were placed about his wrists, and, when several men appeared, Nick was on his feet and helping his prisoner whom he had avoided injuring as much as possible, to get up from the floor of the cab.

The group of men, who hurried up to the engine when it came to a standstill, were as bewildered a collection of citizens as could be found anywhere.

One of them was the engineer whom the fugitive had pitched out of the cab.

Another was the teamster whose horse Nick had taken, and then there were five or six laborers, who had been working in the yard.

They had all been enjoying the noon hour quietly, when the yard was invaded by what they imagined to be two maniacs, who seized an engine and a horse and started up the tracks running inland as if Old Nick were after them.

They started after the pair on foot, but, of course, they were left far behind.

Still they could see what was going on before them.

The frightened horse, which had been left behind by Nick, was caught and sent back by one of the men, and then the party started on at a run, after the locomotive, which they now saw was beginning to slow up.

They had a run of half a mile, and, when they reached the engine, they stared open-mouthed at the two dripping figures within.

Nick had just had one of the toughest fights of his career.

It was not the struggle in the cab—for once he laid hands on his man it was an easy matter for a man of Nick's immense strength to subdue him—but the getting into the cab that had been such a terrible experience.

The thief had tried to fight Nick out with a big shovel.

Blow after blow had landed on the detective's head and knuckles, and he was now dripping blood from a dozen cuts.

The pain from his wounds was excruciating.

An ordinary man would have fainted from them, but Nick Carter was no ordinary man.

He set his teeth hard and looked out at the crowd of men who had gathered about the cab of the engine, meanwhile keeping a firm hand on the collar of his prisoner.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am Nick Carter, the detective. Perhaps some of you may have heard of me."

There was a chorus of replies from the group of men:

"I should say we hev!"

"So you're Nick Carter, hey?"

"There ain't many people who hasn't heard of you."

"We knew you were pretty swift, but you're swifter than we thought you were."

Not one of the men thought of doubting the detective's word.

The handcuffs on the prisoner's wrists, Nick's tall figure and clear, commanding voice were enough for them.

Besides the chase they had just witnessed was now explained.

"I'm sorry to have disturbed you at your dinner," said Nick, "and to have run off with your horse, but I was on pressing business just then."

"Yer kin have the horse. Keep it if you want," said the teamster, whose horse Nick had taken. "A man who has done what you've just done kin have me last cent."

"Much obliged," said Nick, with a smile, "what I want now is a doctor, to tie up some of these little scratches of mine."

"You'll have that," said the teamster, and he started off immediately at a run.

"Now," said Nick, "I want to take this prisoner to any place where I can keep him safely for an hour. I don't want to lock him up just at present."

"I'll show you where to put him," said a man in the back of the group. "My name is Sims. I'm a telegraph operator and I attend to the signaling on this line. I've got a little office on the track here, where you can put him."

"All right," said Nick.

Sims led the way, and the prisoner, who had not uttered a word, but had stood weak and out of breath beside Nick during the conversation, was taken to the little shanty, where he sat in a chair, still speechless and shaking like a leaf.

The bushy whiskers he wore were now pushed to one side, and it was evident that they were false.

Nick dismissed the crowd of men at the door of the shanty.

"I'm grateful to you all," he said, "for your kind assistance. I'm sorry I can't tell you the prisoner's name."

There was a cheer for Nick, and the group dispersed.

A doctor arrived at this time, but before Nick would allow him to dress his wounds, he sent off two telegrams, one to Chick and the other to James Hackett, the banker.

"Mr. Sims," he said to the operator, "I expect to search the prisoner in the presence of three other witnesses beside yourself in about an hour. In the meantime I want you to help me watch him to see that he makes no attempt to remove anything from any of his pockets."

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

Chick and Patsy lost no time in getting to the signal shanty, after they had received Nick's telegram.

When they arrived, Nick's clothes, as well as those of the prisoner, had been dried before the stove in the shanty and Nick's wounds had been cared for and bandaged up.

Chick recognized the prisoner in spite of his disguise.

It will be remembered that Nick had given Chick a slip of paper several days before with a name written on it.

Chick was told to look up the name on the passenger lists of outgoing steamships. He had found it on the lists of the *Kaiserin.*

The name was that of the man now in irons, and Chick was not surprised to see him a prisoner.

Patsy was surprised, however, and showed it.

"I have sent for you," said Nick, addressing both, "so that I can search this man in the presence of witnesses and prove that he has the stolen jewels.

"Mr. Hackett is coming, and I want to prove to him, by the evidence of his own senses, who it was that stole the jewels."

"What do you want other witnesses for?" asked Patsy.

"I don't want to lay myself open to a prosecution for false arrest. Mr. Hackett will be here shortly. In his presence I will take from this man's breast pocket the stolen jewels. My hunt for the Hackett jewels is about over."

When Mr. Hackett arrived, in answer to Nick's telegram, he was anxious to see the man who had stolen the jewels. When Nick removed the disguise from the prisoner he nearly fainted.

It was Theodore Hackett, his son!

He was the man whose name Nick had written on

the piece of paper he handed to Chick on the day he undertook the case.

Nick drew the sealed package from the young man's pocket, unsealed it, and disclosed to view the missing jewels, and Mr. Hackett was forced to admit his son's guilt.

The mystery of the Hackett jewelry robbery was solved.

Mr. Hackett refused to prosecute his son or have him placed under arrest, and Nick assured him that the matter could easily be hushed up.

"My assistants and myself never disclose professional secrets," said Nick. "You are at liberty to circulate the report that I made that arrest by mistake."

"Thank you," said the banker.

"You can rely on me for silence," said Sims.

The banker thanked him and then turned to his son.

"If Mr. Carter will release you," he said, "we will go. I shall not prosecute you, but I think that you had better leave the East and go out on a ranch to begin life over again."

Nick unlocked the handcuffs and handed the package, containing the jewels, to the banker.

"I restore these to you before witnesses," he said; "my connection with the case is now finished. I have restored the stolen goods and pointed out the thief."

The banker and his son left the shanty without a word.

The Carters left a little later, after shaking hands with Sims.

There was a certified check of large amount to Nick's order from Hackett awaiting him when he returned to his office—his fee in the case.

Nick is not very talkative as a rule, in regard to cases, but Chick managed to draw him out as to his reasons for spotting young Theodore Hackett so early in the game.

"I happened to know from a friend of mine," said Nick, "that the young fellow had a lot of gambling debts. Then I saw that the chest from which the jewels had been taken was not broken open by a professional burglar."

"But how about Maquire?" Patsy asked.

"He broke in," said Nick, "but the bulldog tackled him before he got upstairs. It's a safe guess that no bulldog will let a burglar rob a house and then tackle him when he starts to go out."

"Then the attempted burglary was a coincidence?" said Chick.

"Not at all," said Nick. "When Theodore learned that there was a burglar in the house he saw his chance. He went upstairs while the rest were in the dining-room and had the job finished before they were through celebrating. Of course they thought that the man who broke in the window stole the jewels."

"Well," said Chick, "we're through with him. He'll go West now and behave himself."

"I hope so," said Nick, "but I'm afraid not. When a man makes a start like that, he generally tries it again."

THE END.

Next week's issue, No. 329, will contain "Nick Carter's Clever Capture; or, The Tip that Didn't Work."

Nick ran up against a new game when the confidential adviser of Millionaire Matthews engaged him to recover some missing government bonds.

There was danger ahead, and no one knew it better than the famous sleuth.

Was the alleged robbery a "blind?" If so, then what was the plot? That is what will puzzle and fascinate you in this great story, for Nick never played the "sucker" more thoroughly or took greater chances than when he walked into the crook's deadly trap.

This story will appear complete in the next number.

STORIES OF MYSTERY.

The stories of mystery that have been sent in are so deep that the editor has been tying his brain up in knots trying to unravel them. He's ready for more, however, and he now calls to your attention that we are giving away as prizes in this contest over one hundred splendid books.

For full particulars look on page 31.

The Counterfeit Case.

(By Cyrus McFaul, Newark, N. Y.)

Ned Brown and Tommy Smith lived in a little town in Western New York. They had read some detective stories and thought they would become detectives. "Tommy," said Ned, "the next mystery that comes along, let's tackle it."

"All right," said Tommy, "I will be your assistant."

Ned was walking along the street, when Tommy hurried up to him, greatly excited. "Come, Ned, quick; I have found a case."

"Where?"

"Well, Ned, I was down to Green's store this morning, after some groceries. Green came in in great haste. 'Well, John,' he said to his clerk, 'I took that money to the bank this morning, and twenty-five dollars of it is bad.' Well, what shall we do? So I hurried to find you."

"Well!" Ned exclaimed, "I am afraid it will be too much for us. But we will go and see Mr. Green."

As they walked into the store Mr. Green was still talking to his clerk.

"Something, boys?" he asked.

"We would like to talk to you a few minutes."

The clerk started to wait upon a customer.

"Say," said Ned, "we would like to try to find out about that money."

"You!" exclaimed Mr. Green, laughing. "Ned, if you and Tommy will find out who gave it to me I will give you $100."

"We will try it, anyway. Let's go home, Ned," said Tommy.

As quick as they were outside Tommy inquired: "What are your plans?"

"I have none yet," Ned answered. "On your way home you stop at Jones', the policeman's, and tell him, and I will meet you at your house at noon."

In the afternoon the boys started out on some imaginary clews, but found that they were a good way from being on the right one.

"We can do no more to-day," said Ned. "You look around and find out all you can, and I will do the same."

A week passed by. The boys were baffled. "We will have to give up," said Tommy to Ned. "We have not found out anything."

"I found out a little," answered Ned.

"What!"

"Well, seven or eight more have got some of that counterfeit money, and they all got five-dollar bills. I have not found out anything, but old Todds, the cobbler, came down to the post office this morning and I thought he acted suspicious. We have got to watch some one, so watch him."

The next morning Todds came to the post office and received a letter. He gazed around a second. The young detectives were there, but were seemingly busy looking out of the window. Todds tore the envelope open, and read the letter.

"We must have it," whispered Tommy.

"Yes; come on, let's follow him," said Ned.

Todds had started toward his home. The boys were following. Todds, as he walked along, tore the letter up and threw it in the street, and went on.

"Too bad!" exclaimed Tommy; "that will do us no good."

"I don't know. You pick up the pieces and I will read this sign."

After he had all the pieces, Ned said: "We will go to your house and put it together."

After a couple of hours of labor Ned read:

"Mr. Todds: I will be up to your house to-night. Keep mum."

There was no name to the letter.

"Well, we will try and see this person to-night, too," said Ned. When the evening train arrived the boys were at the station. Several people left the cars, among them a flashily dressed man.

"I bet," whispered Ned, "that is the man."

As luck would have it, the man stepped up to the boys and asked them the way to Mr. Todds'. The young detectives gave him the direction to take and followed him. The swell bought a paper, then went on. When he got to Todds' house, darkness had come. So the boys had no fear of being seen. The man rang the bell and in a few moments was admitted.

"Well," said Tommy, "we are left behind."

"You stay here," answered Ned, "and I will sneak in the back way."

Walking through the back shed, Ned opened the shop door. He heard voices coming that way. Closing the door nearby, he waited.

"I have been making a good thing out of that money," Todds was saying. "I have passed nearly one hundred and twenty-five dollars, and no one suspects me yet.

"Maybe they can't tell it."

"How much have you got of it, John?" Todds then asked.

"I have got in this valise about three thousand dollars, and where do you think would be the best place to hide it?"

"They say," Todds answered, "that the simplest place is the best. So put it in that old teakettle and hang it up."

Ned waited for no more. Going quietly out where

Tommy was, he quickly told him what he had seen. Tommy went and saw the bill that John had given the newsdealer for the paper. It was counterfeit, as Tommy could see. Ned hurried to the justice and swore out a warrant for Todds and John Scamp. Jones, the policeman, Mr. Green and the two young detectives hurried back to Todds' house.

Tommy and Jones went in the front door, which was unlocked, while Ned and Mr. Green went in the back way.

"I arrest you two," exclaimed Jones.

"What for?" said Todds, after they were handcuffed.

Ned told them the charge he had against them.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the rogue from New York. "You can convict this old gawk," pointing to Todds, "but I have not done anything, and I have not got any counterfeit money."

"Well," said Ned, "we will see what is in that old teakettle."

The rogue sprang forward, but was held back, while Ned took the counterfeit out of the kettle. A search revealed about one hundred dollars of bad money in Todds' pockets. Two weeks later, at the trial, Mr. Todds turned State's evidence. He said that John Scamp had written to him about a year ago. Scamp was to furnish the counterfeit money and Todds was to give him one-half of the good money.

Todds got a light sentence. John Scamp got three years for giving the bad bill to the newsdealer, but he would not tell where he got the counterfeit money. Our two young heroes got their reward. So ended their counterfeit case.

Denver Dan's Murder Case.

(By Earl Jukes, Belvidere, Ill.)

Dan was just preparing to go out, when a knock was heard at the door and a messenger came in with a note, which read:

"Please come at once to 3124 Washington Avenue. My uncle was killed last night, and I am afraid I will be suspected. GEORGE HANSON."

Dan left immediately, with orders for Joe and Harry to follow. He soon arrived at 3124. It was a large stone house, bleak and empty-looking in outward appearance. Dan went to the door and heard the bell ring as he pushed the button. The door was opened by a little fellow with gray hair and side-whiskers.

"Is Mr. George Hanson in?" asked Dan.

Before the butler could reply a voice from upstairs said:

"Yes; come right up, Mr. Scott."

"Just call me Dan—Denver Dan."

"All right, Dan."

When Dan was halfway up the stairs he looked back and saw the butler watching him closely.

"That fellow," he thought, "knows something about this."

Dan then took out a notebook and wrote this down. He was not afraid he would forget it, but he thought it best to write it down.

"Here is the room where he was killed," said George, indicating the door immediately in front of Dan.

Dan entered and saw there on the bed an old man lying on his face in the bed. Dan quickly reached the bedside, and turning the old man over, he found a piece of cloth in his grasp. He took this and put it in his pocket. He was just going to write something in his notebook, when he saw the face of the man, and started back.

"What is the matter?" said George.

"That is the man whom the police have been hunting for these many years."

"Are you sure?" queried George.

"Yes; but did you ever hear the butler call your uncle anything but Hanson?" asked Dan.

"No," said George, shaking his head, "and yet it seems as though I heard him say to him, 'Mortimer, you're a fool!' but I am not sure."

"Did your uncle ever go out, or have any one come here?"

"No, never," replied George. "The butler and myself are the only ones who ever saw him."

Dan had been writing in his book, when he suddenly pointed to the only door in the room, except the one they had entered, and asked: "Where does that lead to?"

"To my room."

"Been opened lately?"

"No, it is never opened."

"Oh!"

Dan was opening a door in a bookcase by the door, when he made this last remark. There were no books in it.

"Had your uncle no books?" asked Dan.

"No, he had none," answered George.

Dan was now pointing to some marks in the bottom of the case.

"Do you recognize them?" he asked.

"No," said George, "I do not."

"Will you ask the butler to bring in that bench out there?" he asked, pointing to a settee in the middle of the yard.

"Why, of course," said George, and he called the butler and gave the strange order.

When the butler had returned from the yard, Dan pointed to the footprints in the snow, and said:

"Do you know them now?"

"Yes," cried George, "they are the footprints of the butler."

Dan then went to a cloth-covered waste-paper basket and picked out some pieces of paper.

"Put these together, if you can," said Dan, as he gave them to George, "while I go downstairs."

Dan went down the back stairs this time, and when he reached the kitchen, he went immediately to the back window and let the curtain go up three times. The last time leaving it up. He then looked out and saw a hand stick out from behind a barrel. He held up three fingers and the hand disappeared.

Then, intending to go back upstairs, he turned around and saw a man standing over him with a knife. It was the butler. It would be folly to resist, but it would also be folly not to. Dan's heart failed him, but he kept up a bold outward appearance.

The butler hissed:

"Denver Dan, your time has come!"

"That may be," said Dan, "but yours has also. If you do not believe me, look behind you."

The butler turned. He was completely fooled, but before he could turn back again, Dan was on his back and had pinioned his arms.

The man was limp in his arms, for, in his wild burst of fury at being thus foiled, he had stabbed himself to the heart. He was beyond all help now, and would never be tried for his sins on earth.

Dan dropped him there and hurried back upstairs. George had the paper put together; it was a confession of Hanson, alias Mortimer.

In it he implicated his two brothers, who were twins—George and Will. George, he spoke of as his butler. He said that Will had threatened his life if he told of the train robbery of which they were guilty.

"So there is another," said Dan, after he had read the confession. "I wonder if we will get him."

He hurried to the window, and said: "Yes, here he comes." In a few moments Harry came up, leading Will. He was an exact picture of George Mortimer. Harry was pretty well bruised up.

"Well," said Dan, addressing Will Mortimer, "you're caught."

"Yes," said Will, "but I'd like to know what for?"

"For the murder of your brother. Last night you hid under Hanson's bed, and when he was asleep you opened the door and crept in here. As your brother was not here, you stood in that bookcase until he entered, when you stabbed him in the back. But he got a small piece of your coat, which you notice is missing. I thought it was the butler until I compared this cloth with your clothing, for you both leave the same footprints. You killed him because he made the confession. Am I right?"

"Yes," said Will, and he added, as he struck Harry a blow over the head that stunned him, "You haven't got me yet."

He then rushed from the room, but Dan gave his time to bringing Harry to. He knew that Joe would get Will, and so he did.

Dan compelled Will to tell where the money was hidden, and he found it, returned it and got a reward of five thousand dollars for his pains.

Will is now serving a life sentence at Joliet prison. It was found that Hanson was no relation to Mortimer. It is thought that Mortimer adopted him to ease his conscience.

A Diamond Thief.

(By H. B. Offer, Denver, Colo.)

Mr. Roberts was the owner of a large jewelry store—one of the largest stores of its kind in the West. The jeweler was deep in thought, when he heard the door click, and saw some one enter. Walking toward the newcomer, he said:

"Good-day, sir; what can I do for you?"

"Is this Mr. Roberts?" asked the stranger.

"Yes, sir, I am Mr. Rowland Roberts, proprietor of this jewelry store."

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Roberts. I am Joe Gray, a detective."

"And you came to help me? With your help, Mr. Gray, I am sure I will recover my stolen diamond."

"Don't be too sure. Come, give me all you know. I like a fresh trail."

"All right, Mr. Gray."

"This morning I lost a fine diamond very mysteriously. A young man, perhaps twenty-three or twenty-four years old, came in to see a diamond. Of course, I showed him a tray of fine diamonds. He looked them all over carefully. None seemed to suit him and he started to go. Before he left the store I missed a very valuable diamond. I called in the police the first thing. The officers searched him well, but found nothing. He was a good talker and the police turned him loose. But I am sure he got the diamond. There is my story, Mr. Gray."

"Can you describe this man?" asked the detective.

"I can tell he is one I could not easily forget. He had a very peculiar scar on his left cheek."

Mr. Roberts went on to tell all he knew of his mysterious customer. Joe Gray listened. Mr. Roberts noticed a smile on the detective's lips.

"Do you know this man whom I have described?"

"Not sure, Mr. Roberts. I shall go now, but I will see you before you close your store."

Joe Gray left the place. "If I don't know the fellow Roberts described, I quit my job," thought Joe Gray. "I know where he hangs out. If he isn't there, he will be at the 'hop joint.' I'll go and see."

The detective went to several saloons in the tough part of the city, and not seeing his man, he started for Chinatown. Passing through dark halls and alleys, he came to a door. Rap, rap, rap.

"Who?" came from the inside.

"Open this door."

"Allee light."

The detective entered.

"No one here, Chin?" asked the detective.

"No, sir."

"All right; I come to-morrow."

Joe Gray went out into the alley. Right next to old Chin's door was a large box, used by the Chinaman for a coal shed. In this box Joe hid. Pretty soon he heard the door open. Through a crack in the box he could see the old Chinaman coming out of his den with a bucket. Joe slipped out of the box. It still being day, he had to be very careful. He opened the door, walked in and crawled under a hop bunk. Joe Gray knew his man would come. He was under just in time, for the Chinaman came in with his water, and with him a man whom Joe could not see. The man was talking to the Chinaman.

"Bring me some hop, Chin," said the man. "I'll smoke here," climbing on the bunk which Joe was under. He commenced to smoke. A few minutes passed, when a rap at the door caused the Chinaman to run toward it, calling:

"Who? who?"

A female voice answered. Chin opened the door. The female went straight toward the bunk where the man was smoking and lay down alongside him.

"Did you make out all right, Charley?" Joe Gray heard the woman ask.

"Yes, Mary. The bulls came in and searched me. I want you to go right away, Mary, and do your part."

"All right, Charley," said Mary. "Give me a few pills and I will go."

Joe Gray was interested now.

"Tell me just where the diamond is, Charley, so I won't have much trouble finding it."

"Just slip your hand under the counter till you come to it. Pinch it off and put it in your handkerchief," said Charley.

Mary got up to go. Then Joe heard Charley say:

"Hurry up, Mary, I am afraid the gum won't stick."

"Ah!" thought the detective. "I have it now."

The girl was gone. So Joe must act quickly. Just then Charley got up to get a drink of water, and Joe Gray slipped out into the alley. Going on a run to the jewelry store, he entered, told all he heard and lay in wait for the woman. Soon she came in and asked for something. When the jeweler turned his back, she slipped her hand along under the edge of the counter and picked something off. Joe Gray jumped out of hiding and grabbed her. Snatching her handkerchief, he tossed it to the jeweler. Mr. Roberts found his diamond in the handkerchief.

"How's this?" he asked.

"I'll tell you," said Joe. "Your customer you suspected is the man who stole your diamond. He came in and looked over your stones. The first chance he got he slipped one in a piece of gum he held in his hand, then stuck it underneath the edge of the counter for this woman to come after later. They are both hop fiends, and I overheard him tell her how to get it."

"Yes, it is the hop," said the woman. "Only for that we would never have been caught."

They were both tried and convicted. Joe Gray received a reward from Mr. Roberts.

Frank Harkins' Last Hunt.

(By Roger N. Teachout, Gunnison, Colo.)

One of the most popular boys in Pond Creek was Frank Harkins. He was a favorite with every one. For this reason his sudden and mysterious disappearance, which, afterward, proved to be death, shocked the whole village. It is this sad event, together with the mystery in which it was involved, that I will attempt to narrate.

About seven o'clock one crisp November morning, in the latter part of the month, Frank, accompanied by his chum, Cecil Wright, started out on a rabbit hunt. Frank carried a twenty-two Stevens rifle, while Cecil had a twelve-gauge shotgun. They lived near some low foothills, and toward these they bent their steps. The hills were covered with large sandstone rocks, scattered here and there. Among them grew small, scrubby cedars, in which rabbits were generally found. The hills in which the boys intended to hunt extended for many miles around, and to find a person lost in them would have been a difficult undertaking.

The boys started and were soon lost to the view of those in the village. The day wore on. It was four o'clock in the afternoon and the boys had not returned. People began to grow anxious. The boys' parents looked in vain for them over an hour. A little after five o'clock, Cecil came home, but by himself. He increased the anxiety of the townspeople by announcing that he had got separated from Frank, and did not know where he was.

"We came to a bluff, and as we thought there would be good hunting on both sides, we parted. I going on the left and Frank on the right. We expected to meet each other at the end of the bluff. But," he continued, "we failed to do so. The bluff grew wider and wider, and we grew farther apart at every step. I became alarmed, and, losing all thought of hunting for anything except Frank, started out to find him. I shot off my gun repeatedly, as a signal to him, but received no answer. That is all I can tell you about him."

For a moment no one spoke. Then some one said: "It would be no use trying to find him to-night, but to-morrow morning, at five o'clock, we must go after him."

"I will go, for one," said a youth by the name of George Hanlin. Several others volunteered, until quite a party was formed. George Hamlin was a great friend of Frank's, and he had a good deal of talent as a detective. This proved very valuable the next day.

The party arrived at the hunting ground of the boys very early in the morning. Cecil showed them where they had separated. There had been a slight fall of snow, so George, the acknowledged leader of the party, could trace Frank's footsteps quite easily. They followed them for over half a mile, without discovering anything, except some blood on the snow where Frank had killed a rabbit. Finally they came to the top of a ridge, where the snow had been blown away, and it was impossible to trace the footprints farther. One of the party suddenly shouted: "See that piece of paper over there by that rock? Perhaps it will pay us to examine it."

The paper proved to be that in which Frank's lunch was wrapped. Around the rock were scattered crumbs. It was plain that the lost boy had stopped there to eat his dinner. They could see his footprints now, so they continued on the trail. The party was startled when, coming around a ledge of rock, they beheld the dead body of Frank Harkins lying stiff and cold in the snow. It was lying face upward, and the unclosed eyes stared at the sky above. It was an awful spectacle. One hand of the boy held a revolver, and upon advancing, George discovered that there was a paper pinned to his coat. Opening it, he read:

"To Whoever Finds My Body: I have taken my own life. I am dissatisfied with it, and desire to quit living. That is all. Frank Harkins."

The party listened in mute surprise. They did not know for what reason Frank would do such a thing.

"I think I understand this little game," said George, as he pulled from his pocket a paper.

It was a note George had received from the dead boy. Comparing it with the paper found on Frank's body, he said:

"You can easily see that these are two different handwritings. This paper," he said, holding up the one found on the body, "is a forgery. Some one has murdered Frank Harkins!"

George examined Frank's revolver. Then he looked at the bullet hole in his temple.

"The boy was not shot with the revolver he has in his hand. The bullet hole is too large. I am going to clear up this mystery if I can possibly do so," declared George.

The company solemnly carried the dead body home. George took charge of the revolver and note.

Several days after, as George was walking along the

street, he picked up a letter. He looked at the address. He thought the handwriting seemed familiar. As he walked along he compared the writing with that of the forged note. There was no doubt but that it was written by the same person.

Presently he passed a man, who asked him if he had found a letter on the street near there.

"Yes," replied George, and he handed it to him.

The man's name was Bill Grimes. He was a worthless fellow, and hardly ever sober. George followed up his clew. He secured, after a length of time, enough evidence on which to arrest the man. When Grimes heard the evidence brought against him in the trial, he gave up hope, and pleaded guilty. He said he had killed the boy to get even with his father, Mr. Harkins, who was his enemy. He had followed the boys to the hills, and there murdered Frank. He was hung for the deed several weeks later.

George became a secret service man, and is now winning much notoriety for himself.

The Post Office Robbery.

(By Sumner S. Morley, Barre, Vt.)

"How much will it cost to send these papers?"

This question was asked by a young man, whom we will call Jones, who attended a seminary in the city of B——, Vermont.

Jones was in the city post office sending a package of papers. He was a man who always wanted to do something in the detective line, but never had the chance.

"Six cents," answered the clerk.

"Weigh it again; it only cost four when it came."

"It will cost you six cents to send them," said the clerk.

"You are trying to cheat me out of two cents, to put in your own pocket."

The clerk owned up to it, and Jones sent it for three cents.

One morning, about a week later, Jones went to the post office. On entering, he found a great commotion going on. In a few moments he learned the safe had been robbed, and he said to himself: "This is my chance."

Jones had done a good turn for the chief of police once, so a few words with him let him in. Jones went to the postmaster, and told him if he would answer a few questions he would capture the thief inside of a week.

"What are the names of your clerks? and what are their addresses?" asked Jones.

"We have two," answered the postmaster. "One is James Johnson, 35 Church Street, and the other is Edward Kent, 15 Park Street."

After looking at the safe a short time, to blind the public, Jones set out. First, he called on Mr. Johnson, a friend of his, for another blind, and found out when he—Jones—would be apt to find Mr. Kent at home. Bidding Mr. Johnson good day, he left, saying, to himself that he had done enough for one day, not wishing to rush things too much.

The next day, in the middle of the forenoon, Jones called on Mr. Kent. Remembering Jones as the person whom he tried to cheat a week before, he was friendly. So Jones came right down to business.

"Edward," said Jones, "I know that you are the one that robbed the safe at the post office, and so do the police. I came here to help you out of your trouble."

"Well," said Edward, "what do you wish me to do?"

"Give me the stolen property. I will keep it safe for you; then if the police make a raid on your place, they will not be able to find it."

Thinking the advice good, he left the room, returning presently with a box under his arm, saying:

"Take it, and keep it safe."

Jones took it and left. He went straight to his room and locked the box in his trunk. Then he went to the chief of police, saying: "Give me a pair of bracelets and permission to arrest a man, and I will bring you the robber of the post office."

The chief gave him what he asked for, and offered him assistance, but Jones said "No."

Jones then left and returned to Mr. Kent's house a little after noon. Edward came to the door himself, and asked, "What's up?"

"I have good news," said Jones. "I have fooled the police, and they are on the wrong track."

Mr. Kent was so overjoyed at this, he forgot himself, and extended his hands to shake. That was just what Jones wanted. When Edward extended his hands, Jones snapped the bracelets.

"What is the meaning of this?" roared Kent.

"It means that you are my prisoner, and that you gave me what you stole for me to prove that you are the right man."

Jones took his prisoner to the police station and left him.

The detective received a large reward, and afterward obtained a position as special policeman in the City of B——.

How a Bicycle Captured a Thief.

(By L. C. Hughes, New Orleans, La.)

It was Christmas Eve when I asked my mother for a bicycle, and she got me one. It was a fine one, too. A month rolled by and I got tired of it. So one night I left it out in the yard. About ten o'clock it began to rain, and I went downstairs and put the bicycle on the gallery and then went to bed. It was about half-past one in the morning when my brother rushed into my room and said that there was a thief downstairs stealing my bicycle, so I jumped and put half of my clothes on. I didn't know what to do. There wasn't a weapon in the house. So I grabbed a large Indian club, and my brother had a walking-cane. We went downstairs. We opened the back door and we saw a big fellow all tangled up in my bicycle. My brother grabbed him and I went and got a policeman, and he was taken to jail. The next morning we found out who he was. His name was William Brown, alias Chicken Thief. He was sent up for one year in Baton Rouge.

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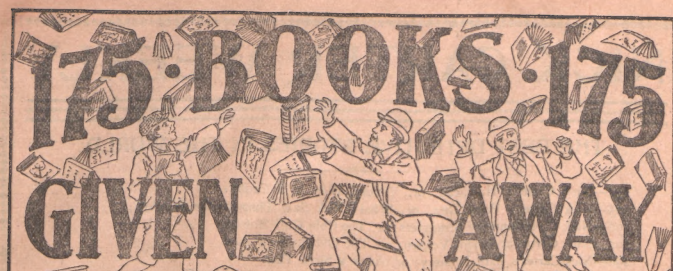

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